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ABSTRACT

Of the 5,227 1973-74 graduates of the Virginia Community College System, the majority (61 percent) were men. Racial minorities comprised 11 percent of the graduates. Although the largest single age group was 21 years or younger, the majority of the graduates were at least 22 years old. Thirteen percent were older than 35, and the median age for all graduates was 23.3 years. The Associate of Applied Science degree, which is an occupational-technical award, was earned by nearly half of the graduates. Two-thirds of the graduates were in occupational-technical programs. College transfer graduates were two times more likely to be men than women. Of college transfer graduates, women more frequently chose the Associate of Arts degree, and men, the Associate of Science degree. Business was the most popular occupational-technical program, followed by engineering, health services, and public service. Although the percentage of white graduates predominated in all curricular groups, larger proportions of minorities were in business and engineering. About half of the graduates completed their programs in the traditional two-year period; about one-fourth took an extra year, and the remaining fourth took more than three years. Eleven tables of data are appended. (Author/NHM)

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A PROFILE OF GRADUATES VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, 1973-74

by

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INTRODUCTION

The graduates of a community college are a key measure of the quality and quantity of its educational output. Although it is usually recognized that a majority of community college students do not complete an educational program which leads to a graduation award, information about graduates is still vital for institutional evaluation and for statewide planning and manpower forecasting. Over a period of time, such accumulated information will indicate the nature and extent of college educational success, and provide baseline information for tracing continued career and personal development of graduates.

Information for this report was submitted by each of Virginia's 23 community colleges on all students who graduated from July 1, 1973 through June 30, 1974. For each graduate, a "G" card was completed, which contained the data elements used in this report as well as additional data for other reports. This information will continue to be available in future years. The purpose of this report is to describe the 1973-74 graduates of Virginia's community colleges in terms of demographic characteristics, types of awards granted, curricula upon graduation, credits earned, and length of time to earn awards. Findings are presented in the next section, followed by a summary of the report. A complete set of tables is located in the Appendix.

The primary users of this report will be college personnel concerned about community college operation and output -- educational planners, administrators, and instructors.

FINDINGS

The findings are presented in the following order: sex, race, and age; types of awards earned; curriculum; credits earned; and length of time to complete an award.

Sex, Race, and Age

Of the 5,227 graduates in 1973-74, 61 percent were men and 39 percent were women (Table 1). The total group was comprised of 89 percent whites and 11 percent minorities. The distribution of the graduates by sex and race is shown in the following tabulation:

Race/Sex Group	Percent
White Men	56%
White Women	33
Minority Women	6
Minority Men	5
Total	100

White men were in the majority, followed by white women. There was one percent more minority women than men. Among whites, men comprised 63 percent whereas among minorities, 47 percent were men (Table 2).

The graduates represented a broad range of ages, as noted in the following tabulation:

Age	Percent
Up to 21	39%
22-24	19
25-29	19
30-34	10
35 and Above	13
Total	100

Although the largest single age group was 21 years or younger, the majority of graduates were at least 22 years old. Thirteen percent were older than 35. The median age for all graduates was 23.3 years (Table 3). It is encouraging to find that many adults beyond the 30-year age range are completing their programs and earning awards.

Types of Awards Earned[1]

The AAS degree was awarded to almost half of the 1973-74 graduates (Table 4). About one in three graduates earned an AA or an AS degree. The certificate was awarded to 15 percent of the total group; and the diploma, to four percent of the graduates.[2]

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[1]The community colleges in Virginia offer five types of awards. The Associate of Arts (AA) and the Associate of Science (AS) programs are designed to lead to transfer to a baccalaureate program. The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs are designed to provide competence for employment in a general occupational field and to include general education. The diploma award normally represents a two-year program which usually includes limited general education and provides employment competence in a specific field. Certificate programs generally require one to less than two years' study and provide competence in a specific job or family of jobs.

[2]Diploma programs are not widely available in the Virginia Community College System.

Both men and women earned the AAS degree more than any other type of award, in almost equal proportions (Table 4). On a proportional basis, somewhat more men than women were granted AS degrees whereas more women were awarded the AA degree. Proportionally, nearly twice as many women as men received the certificate, while almost no women earned a diploma.

Types of awards when examined by race also showed some differences (Table 4). Although proportionally equal percentages of whites and minorities earned AAS degrees, 15 percent more minorities chose the certificate, while one percent more whites earned diplomas.

The following tabulation presents the types of awards earned by each sex and racial group:

	AA and AS	AAS	Diploma	Certificate	Total
White Men	37%	47%	6%	10%	100%
Minority Men	22	52	7	19	100
White Women	31	50	-	19	100
Minority Women	21	43	-	36	100

White men and women earned the AA and AS degrees proportionally more than their counterparts. In fact, 15 percent more white men and ten percent more white women chose the college transfer program. Only slight differences between the two racial groups were noted in the AAS degree category, except for minority women, who earned the AAS less than the other groups. White and minority men earned the diploma on a nearly equal basis proportionally, Neither white nor minority women chose the diploma. More than one in three minority women chose the certificate compared to less than one in five among the other groups. White men had the fewest certificate graduates on a proportional basis. These findings indicate that more minorities than whites (men and especially women) chose programs which led to faster entry into the job market. More whites were enrolled in programs which allowed continuing their formal education beyond the community college.

The distribution of awards across different age groups is presented in the following tabulation:

	Up to 21	22-24	25-29	30-34	35 and Above	Total
AA/AS	36%	19%	19%	12%	14%	100%
AAS	38	19	21	10	12	100
Dip.	45	29	19	3	4	100
Cert.	47	19	14	7	13	100

Since 39 percent of all graduates were in the youngest age group, it would be expected that they would represent the largest proportion in the age distribution of each award. The tabulation shows this to be the case. The number of diploma graduates decreased proportionally as their age increased. With that exception, there are large percentages of all age groups represented among the graduates of each type of award. These data support the conclusion that the community college is becoming an institution which serves a broad array of citizens in many types of programs.

Curriculum

Two-thirds of the 1973-74 graduates had been enrolled in occupational-technical programs and one-third were in college transfer programs.

In the Virginia Community College System, approximately 125 separate occupational-technical curricula are offered (Table 5). For reporting purposes, they have been grouped into six categories. The following tabulation shows the percentage of graduates in each curriculum:

Curricular Group	Percent	
Occupational-Technical		67%
Agriculture and Natural Resources	1	
Business	26	
Communications/Media	1	
Engineering	18	
Health Services	12	
Public Service	8	
College Transfer		33
Total		100

Of the occupational-technical graduates, the largest group was in business, followed by engineering and health services. Eight percent of the graduates were in public service. One percent each was in agriculture and natural resources and in communications and media.

Men and women demonstrated preferences for different curricula as shown in the following tabulation:

Curricular Group	Men	Women	Total
Occupational-Technical	59%	41%	100%
Agriculture/Natural Resources	82	18	100
Business	45	55	100
Communications/Media	63	37	100
Engineering	98	2	100
Health Services	13	87	100
Public Service	82	18	100
College Transfer	66	34	100

Men were the majority in both occupational-technical fields and college transfer, although they were a larger majority in college transfer. Engineering was overwhelmingly selected by men, as were agriculture and natural resources, and public service. Women represented the large majority of the graduates in health services and were the majority in business curricula.

White and minority graduates were not proportionally distributed among all curricula (Table 6). Thirteen percent more whites than blacks were college transfer graduates. All agriculture and natural resources graduates were white, while 6 percent more engineering graduates were

white. Equal percentages of whites and minorities chose health services, but minorities were much more frequently in business and public service on a proportional basis.

Curricular groups attracted graduates of different ages as noted in the tabulation which follows:

Curricular Group	Median Age	
Occupational-Technical		23.1
Agriculture/Natural Resources	22.1	
Business	21.7	
Communications/Media	22.6	
Engineering	22.7	
Health Services	23.8	
Public Service	27.5	
College Transfer		23.5
Overall Median		23.3

The occupational-technical and college transfer graduate groups were nearly the same median age.

Among occupational-technical groups, public service graduates were the oldest group, and business graduates were the youngest (Table 8). Interestingly, the median age of college transfer graduates was over 23 years, which is a year or two beyond the traditional age for college graduation.

There is a different pattern of curricular distribution for each of the three types of awards (Table 9). Business students comprised 40 percent of all AAS graduates, followed by students in health services (22%), engineering (21%) and public service (14%). The large majority (96%) of diploma graduates were in engineering, with an additional three percent in communications and media and one percent in business. Certificate graduates were dispersed among four curricular groups: business (46%), engineering (31%), health services (13%) and public service (10%).

Credits Earned

The range of credits earned by graduates of different awards was very broad (Table 10). AA/AS and AAS degrees each require a student to earn a minimum of 97 credits. Credits required for a diploma vary considerably although most programs generally call for about two years (6 - 8 quarters) of full-time enrollment. Certificate programs have the greatest range of credit requirements, depending on the program and the college.

Interpreting these data is especially difficult, and one must be careful in basing conclusions on them. The following reasons suggest why this caution is necessary:

1. For some transfer students, credits earned at other institutions

were not reported. Therefore, fewer credits than were actually earned were reported, resulting in a lower total credits-earned figure.

2. In all degree programs and in some non-degree programs, credits earned in developmental courses do not apply toward the requirements of an award. Nonetheless, these credits were reported, possibly resulting in a higher than expected credits-earned figure.

3. Because the specific course requirements among programs differ, students who change programs may accumulate additional credits which may not be required in their curricula of graduation.

4. The credit requirements of various diploma and certificate programs vary considerably.

5. The nomenclature for diploma and certificate programs is not standard across colleges. As a result, programs by the same names at two or more colleges may require considerably different numbers of credit. Also, some programs which have the same or similar titles and similar occupational objectives have different credit requirements.

6. The data on credits earned are cumulative. The record of a student who earned more than one award would show the total credits earned.

Length of Time to Complete an Award

The number of years which these graduates took to complete their awards varied considerably (Table II). The following tabulation lists the percentage of AA/AS, AAS, and diploma graduates in one group and the certificate graduates in another in terms of length of time taken to complete an award:

Length of Time	Percent of AA/AS, AAS, and Diploma Graduates	Percent of Certificate Graduates
Through 1 Year	2	20
Over 1 to 2 Years	47	56
Over 2 to 3 Years	27	14
Over 3 to 4 Years	12	6
Over 4 to 5 Years	5	3
Over 5 Years	7	1

Of the AA/AS, AAS, and diploma graduates, half completed their programs in the traditional two year period. About one-fourth took an extra year, and the remaining fourth took more than three years. It is interesting to note that seven percent of these graduates had started their programs more than five years prior to graduating.

Certificate graduates generally took less time to complete their programs. One in five finished in a year or less, and three-fourths had finished by the end of the second year. However, even in these

programs, which for the most part require about a year's work, one in four students took more than two years.

These data are also subject to some caution in interpretation. In a number of instances, certificate requirements parallel diploma requirements, the major difference being nomenclature.

These findings appear to indicate that many students at Virginia's community colleges take more than the minimal -- and traditional -- time required for a full-time student to earn an award. Separate data on full-time and part-time students who graduated were not available and therefore prevent further interpretation.

SUMMARY

The majority (61%) of the 1973-74 VCCS graduates were men. Racial minorities comprised 11 percent of the graduates. Although a large proportion of graduates were 21 years old or less, the community colleges graduated sizable numbers of students from many age groups. The median age of graduates was 23.3 years.

The Associate of Applied Science degree, which is an occupational-technical award, was earned by nearly half of the graduates. Two-thirds of the graduates were in occupational-technical programs.

The AAS degree was awarded to a larger proportion of graduates, both men and women, than any other type of award. The diploma was chosen by men with only one exception. Women were much more likely to be in certificate programs. Of college transfer graduates, women more frequently chose the AA degree, and men, the AS degree.

Equal proportions of graduates in both white and minority groups earned the AAS degree. Whites earned college transfer degrees proportionally more than did minority students, who were much more likely to earn the certificate. Nearly equal proportions of whites and minorities earned diplomas. There were sizable numbers of all age groups represented among all types of awards.

Business was the most popular occupational-technical program, followed by engineering, health services, and then public service. Agriculture and natural resources and communications and media were each selected by only one percent of the graduates.

Agriculture and natural resources, engineering, communications and media, and public services were chosen primarily by men. More women proportionally were attracted to business and health services. College transfer graduates were two times more likely to be men than women.

The percentage of white graduates predominated in all curricular groups, although larger proportions of minorities were in business and engineering.

Evidently, community colleges are enabling students to maintain considerable flexibility in the time they need to earn a graduation award. Half of the associate degree and diploma graduates completed their programs within a two-year period. One fourth took an extra year, and the remainder took longer.

APPENDIX

TABLES

TABLE 1

SEX AND RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES

	RACE					
	White		Minority		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	2,927	91	280	9	3,207	61
Female	1,703	84	317	16	2,020	39
TOTAL	4,630	89	597	11	5,227	100

TABLE 2

THE RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES ACROSS SEX

	RACE			
	White		Minority	
	N	%	N	%
Male	2,927	63	280	47
Female	1,703	37	317	53
TOTAL	4,630	100	597	100

TABLE 3

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES BY TYPE OF AWARD

	Median	Up to 21		22-24		25-29		30-34		35 and Above		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Associate of Arts	20.9	109	51	40	19	26	12	14	7	25	12	215	100
Associate of Science	23.5	525	34	284	19	312	20	196	13	214	14	1,531	100
Associate of Applied Science	23.3	928	38	487	19	535	21	258	10	310	12	2,518	100
Diploma	22.4	91	45	58	29	37	19	5	3	7	4	198	100
Certificate	21.4	360	47	144	19	107	14	51	7	107	13	765	100
TOTAL	22.0	2,013	39	1,014	19	1,017	19	524	10	659	13	5,227	100

TABLE 4

SEX AND RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES ACROSS TYPE OF AWARD

			SEX				RACE			
	Total		Men		Women		White		Minority	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Associate of Arts	215	4	86	3	129	7	196	4	19	3
Associate of Science	1,531	29	1,063	33	468	23	1,421	31	110	18
Associate of Applied Science	2,518	48	1,530	48	988	49	2,237	48	281	48
Diploma	198	4	196	6	2	-	178	4	20	3
Certificate	765	15	332	10	433	21	598	13	167	28
TOTAL	5,227	100	3,207	100	2,020	100	4,630	100	597	100

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES BY CURRICULA

	All Graduates	
	N	Pct
Agricultural & Natural Resources		
Animal Husband		
Horse Live Mgt		
Animal Tech	6	17.6
Ag Business	13	38.2
Agricultural	1	2.9
Forest Tech	12	35.3
Horticultural		
Nat Res Mgt	2	5.9
Nat Res Mgt SE		
Sub-Total	34	100.0
Business & Related		
Accounting	161	12.0
DP Comp Prog	112	8.3
Com/Mach	5	.4
Business Mgt	355	26.4
Gen Business	12	.9
Data Process	2	.1
Aux Equip Opr	5	.4
Clerical Stud	190	14.1
Bus Ind Super	14	1.0
HPI Mgt	44	3.3
Insurance		
Hotel Mot Mgt	1	.1
Food Ser Mgt	28	2.1
Institu Mgt	1	.1
Merchandising	40	3.0
Gen Merchant	3	.2
Food Marketing	3	.2
Real Estate	14	1.0
Stenography	80	5.9

	All Graduates	
	N	Pct
Business & Related (cont'd)		
Sec Science	272	20.2
Traffic Mgt	2	.1
Transportation	1	.1
Sub-Total	1345	100.0
Communications & Media		
Commercial Art	50	80.6
Media Ad Arts	5	8.1
Crafts Prod	2	3.2
Printing	5	8.1
Sub-Total	62	100.0
Engineering & Related		
Architectural	19	2.0
Auto Analysis	63	6.6
Air Con Refrig	71	7.4
Aviation	13	1.4
Appli Repair		
Auto Body	7	.7
Automotive	30	3.1
Auto Diagnosis	6	.6
Cabinet Making		
Chemical Tech	1	.1
Civil Engr	34	3.6
Broadcast Engr	5	.5
Constr Mgt		
Diesal Mech		
Draft Design	149	15.6

TABLE 5 (CONT'D)

	All Graduates	
	N	Pct
Engineering & Related (cont'd)		
Drafting	36	3.8
Tech Illustra	9	.9
Electrical	10	1.0
Electronics	110	11.5
Arch Draft	5	.5
Indust Engr	6	.6
Instrument	6	.6
E/E Engr Tech	96	10.1
Electricity	34	3.6
Elec-Elec	27	2.8
Electromechan	2	.2
Ind Electro RP		
Electron Serv	38	4.0
Machine Tech	10	1.0
Mach Tool Opr	16	1.7
Marine Science	9	.9
Masonry	1	.1
Mech Engr Tech	39	4.1
Mechanical	8	.8
Machine Opr	17	1.8
Machine Shop	39	4.0
Tool Making		
Plumbing	8	.8
Industrial	4	.4
Engr Tech Asst	1	.1
Rad/TV Mfg Ser	1	.1
Textile Mgt	1	.1
Auto Machine	1	.1
Auto Part Mech		
Motorcyl Main	1	.1
Build Constr		
Indust Main		
Industrial Mgt	8	.8
Welding	10	1.0
Furniture Prod		
Carpentry		
Mining Tech	5	.5
Water Well Dr		
Sub-Total	954	100.0

	All Graduates	
	N	Pct
Health Services		
Dental Lab	15	2.3
Dent Hygiene		
Dent Assist	35	5.4
Dent Lab Asst	11	1.7
Med Lab Asst	2	.3
Medical Lab	20	3.1
Medical Record	25	3.9
Mental Health	39	6.0
Mortuary Sci	18	2.8
Nursing	378	58.6
Pract Nurse	54	8.4
Radiologic	35	5.4
Phys Therapy	11	1.7
Resp Therapy	2	.3
Sub-Total	645	100.0
Public Services		
Comm Soc Serv	23	5.2
Comm S S Asst	2	.5
Firescience	35	7.9
Firefighting	1	.2
Rec & Parks	18	4.1
Law Enforce	25	5.7
Police Science	265	60.1
Corrections	6	1.4
Public Admin	7	1.6
Public Service		
Citizen Develop		
Human Services	7	1.6
Occup Safty		
Applied Music		
Educ Tech	4	.9
Te-Inst Aide	5	1.1
Erl Child Devel	1	.2
Child Care	23	5.2
Science Tech Al	4	.9

TABLE 5 (CONT'D)

	All Graduates	
	N	Pct
Public Services (cont'd)		
Environmental Science Tech R & T Production	7	1.6
Sub-Total	441	100.0
College Transfer		
Art	14	.8
Business Admin	564	32.3
Liberal Arts	194	11.1
Music	7	.4
Pre-Engr	47	2.7
Pre-Tech Ed	657	37.6
Science	263	15.1
Sub-Total	1746	100.0
Grand Total	5227	100.0

TABLE 6

SEX AND RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES ACROSS CURRICULAR GROUP

	Total		SEX				RACE			
			Men		Women		White		Minority	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Occupational-Technical	3,481	67	2,058	64	1,423	70	3,013	65	468	78
Agriculture/Natural Resources	34	1	28	1	6	-	34	1	-	-
Business Related Programs	1,345	26	611	19	734	36	1,103	24	242	41
Communications/Media	62	1	39	1	23	1	55	1	7	1
Engineering/Related Programs	954	18	936	29	18	1	875	19	79	13
Health Services	645	12	82	3	563	28	571	12	74	12
Public Service	441	8	362	11	79	4	375	8	66	11
College Transfer	1,746	33	1,149	36	597	30	1,617	35	129	22
TOTAL	5,227	100	3,207	100	2,020	100	4,630	100	597	100

TABLE 7

SEX AND RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES WITHIN CURRICULAR GROUP

	SEX						RACE					
	Men		Women		Total		White		Minority		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Occupational-Technical	2,058	34	1,423	66	3,481	100	3,013	87	468	13	3,481	100
Agriculture/Natural Resources	28	82	6	18	34	100	34	100	-	-	34	100
Business Related Programs	611	45	734	55	1,345	100	1,103	82	242	18	1,345	100
Communications/Media	39	63	23	37	62	100	55	89	7	11	62	100
Engineering/Related Programs	936	98	18	2	954	100	875	92	79	8	954	100
Health Services	82	13	563	87	645	100	571	89	74	11	645	100
Public Service	362	82	79	18	441	100	375	85	66	15	441	100
College Transfer	1,149	66	597	34	1,746	100	1,617	93	129	7	1,746	100
TOTAL	3,207	61	2,020	39	5,227	100	4,630	89	597	11	5,227	100

TABLE 8

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES BY CURRICULUM

	Median	Up to 21		22-24		25-29		30-34		35 and Above		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Occupational-Technical	22.6	1379	64	689	81	679	81	314	88	420	86	3481	100
Agriculture/Natural Resources	21.6	15	44	10	29	5	15	2	6	2	6	34	100
Business Related Programs	21.2	658	48	221	16	223	17	115	9	128	10	1,345	100
Communications/Media	21.4	23	37	21	34	14	23	2	5	2	3	62	100
Engineering/Related Programs	22.2	388	41	218	23	221	23	70	7	57	6	954	100
Health Services	23.3	216	33	140	22	112	17	50	8	127	20	645	100
Public Service	26.2	79	18	79	18	104	24	75	16	104	24	441	100
College Transfer	23.2	634	36	325	19	338	19	210	12	239	14	1,746	100
TOTAL	22.0	2,013	39	1,014	19	1,017	19	524	10	659	13	5,227	100

TABLE 9

CURRICULAR DISTRIBUTION OF O-T GRADUATES BY TYPE OF AWARD

	Total	AAS		Diploma		Certificate	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Occupational-Technical	3,481	2,518	100	197	100	765	100
Agriculture/Natural Resources	34	34	1	-	1	-	-
Business Related Programs	1,345	999	40	2	1	344	46
Communications/Media	62	57	2	5	3	-	-
Engineering/Related Programs	954	525	21	190	96	239	31
Health Services	645	543	22	-	-	102	13
Public Service	441	360	14	1	-	80	10

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES
DEC 12 1975
CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES

TABLE 10

NUMBER OF CREDITS EARNED BY TYPE OF AWARD, PERCENT

Number of Credits	AA/AS	AAS	Diploma	Certificate
45 or Under	-	-	-	2
46 - 95	1*	2*	4	69
96 - 100	30	25	14	1
101 - 110	30	32	10	2
111 or More	39	41	72	26
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

*These represent students transferring to the community colleges, who did not always have their transfer credits reported.

TABLE 11

NUMBER OF YEARS TAKEN TO COMPLETE AN AWARD

	Total		AA/AS		AAS		Diploma		Certificate	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0 to One Year	252	5	50	3	48	2	2	1	152	20
More Than One to Two Years	2529	48	899	51	1111	44	87	44	432	56
More Than Two to Three Years	1323	25	438	25	718	28	63	32	104	14
More Than Three to Four Years	563	11	178	10	317	12	22	11	46	6
More Than Four to Five Years	256	5	79	5	149	6	7	3	21	3
More Than Five Years	304	6	102	6	175	7	17	9	10	1